

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES
ON MEMORIAL DAY**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 27, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember the millions of women and men who have given their lives to serve in our Nation's Armed Forces. Their courageous efforts have been honored at this time of year since the fighting of the Civil War. During the Civil War numerous families began their heartfelt commemorative efforts and since then the countless events which followed have generated an uncompromising level of respect and reverence for our beloved soldiers.

Yet we must not forget the reasons for which our Armed Forces have fought for our Nation: to preserve and protect the blanket of freedom under which we have rested with security for over 200 years. Since the end of the Civil War so much has changed, and yet so much in our society remains the same. Those Soldiers fought to protect our inalienable rights as humans and have continued to do so from that day to this.

Even today our men and women sacrifice their lives to protect our interests overseas. We must remember them in these times of conflict. Our sentiments go out not only to the soldiers who have fought in our conflicts of yesteryear. We must include today's Armed Forces in our thoughts and our prayers for they continue to struggle and rightfully defend our beliefs in life, liberty, and freedom in Europe and around the world.

Entering into the 21st century we look forward to a time of peace in which our decisions to take direction are reserved for reflection. I remind you Mr. Speaker that we do not remember in joy, but in sorrow. We do not reflect with happiness, we reflect in pain. The millions of men and women dedicated their lives to fight so that we can look forward to a time in which we shall fight no more and we must never forget them.

Since the first official commemoration of our soldiers of war on May 30, 1868, as Decoration Day, our Country has devoted a continuous and conscious effort to support our troops and the battles they have fought. In 1971, to recognize the weight of their importance, Congress declared Memorial Day a National holiday.

Mr. Speaker, to continue our recognition of our soldiers' tireless efforts, I am currently introducing a bill to grant the Korean Veterans Association a Federal Charter. Granting this Federal Charter is a small expression of appreciation that, we as a Nation, can offer to these men and women to show our continued support, one which will enable them to work as a unified front to ensure that the "Forgotten War" is forgotten no more.

Please join with me in expressing full recognition and thanks to those who have served our Nation and its Armed Forces on this Memorial Day. The respect and debt of gratitude we owe these honorable men and women for preserving our Nation and our freedom is immeasurable.

TRIBUTE TO DR. AARON S. GOLD:
RABBI, TEACHER, SCHOLAR,
SPIRITUAL LEADER

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 27, 1999

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to congratulate Rabbi Dr. Aaron S. Gold on his retirement after serving the Rabbinic for 50 years, and for his dedication and service to the San Diego community. Rabbi Gold has been a spiritual and community leader to many individuals in San Diego—and I would like to take a moment to honor him and his accomplishments.

Rabbi Gold was born in Poland and came to America during the depression years, prior to World War II. He graduated from Wisconsin State College with Highest Honors in the English and Speech Departments. He later received his M.A. from Columbia University where he studied Education for Marriage and Family Life, and later completed his Ph.D. in Family Education.

Rabbi Gold came to San Diego in 1974, and immediately became an active community leader. He was invited to join the boards of the United Jewish Federation, Jewish Community Relations Council and the Bureau of Jewish Education. He is particularly known for his work in promoting spiritual harmony and understanding among all religions, and has been active with the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the Ecumenical Council. He has also appeared on a number of radio and television shows to promote interfaith activities.

His initiation of a joint Thanksgiving Service with the San Carlos United Methodist Church was so successful that it became the annual Thanksgiving service for the Tifereth and many churches of the Navajo Interfaith Association—he is lovingly called "our Rabbi" by the members of the San Carlos United Methodist Church. His ecumenical efforts have been recognized with a number of plaques and citations.

Rabbi Gold has also reached out to the youth in our community by helping establish the Coalition for the Jewish Youth for San Diego, San Diego Jewish Academy and the Community High School of Jewish Studies.

He also served as the President of the San Diego Rabbinical Association for two years, and he and his wife Jeanne were Rabbinic

Couple for Jewish Encounter weekend in the San Diego area, where they helped 1,000 couples enhance theirs and their childrens' lives.

In addition to his many contributions to the San Diego community, he has served our country as the Chaplain for Suffolk County Air Force Base in Long Island; Cancer patients in Long Island; the Boy Scouts Councils in Wisconsin, Long Island, Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania; and Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada.

Rabbi Gold has had an amazing life and an incredible career. He has touched the lives of many people and has served our country well. I congratulate Rabbi Gold on all of his accomplishments and wish him the best in his retirement.

CHELTHENHAM ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL, MCKINLEY ELEMEN-
TARY SCHOOL, AND THOMAS
FITZWATER ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL ARE WINNERS OF THE
BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS AWARD

HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 27, 1999

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding efforts of three elementary schools in Pennsylvania's Thirteenth Congressional District, which I am proud to represent.

On behalf of the entire Montgomery County community, I congratulate these schools for winning a national competition to earn recognition as Blue Ribbon Schools of excellence. The U.S. Department of Education recently named Cheltenham Elementary School in Cheltenham, Pennsylvania; McKinley Elementary School in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania; and Thomas Fitzwater Elementary School of Willow Grove, Pennsylvania as 1998-1999 winners of the prestigious Blue Ribbon Schools Award.

The Blue Ribbon Schools Program was established by the U.S. Secretary of Education in 1982 with three goals in mind: identify and recognize outstanding public and private schools across the United States, offer a comprehensive framework of key criteria for school effectiveness, and facilitate the sharing of best practices among schools. Over the years, the program has developed a reputation of offering a powerful tool for school improvement in addition to providing recognition.

Before winning the national Blue Ribbon Schools Award, Cheltenham, McKinley, and Thomas Fitzwater Elementary Schools all were named as Pennsylvania Blue Ribbon schools and were nominated for national recognition by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Each school had to work very hard to earn the Blue Ribbon status, going through

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a demanding self-assessment experience that involved the entire school community, including students, teachers, parents, administrators, and business leaders.

Each of these schools have been judged particularly effective in meeting local, state, and national goals. In addition, each school displayed strong leadership, clear vision and a sense of mission shared by the entire school community, high quality teaching, challenging and up-to-date curriculum, policies that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning, family involvement, and equity in education to assure that all students are helped to achieve high standards.

Blue Ribbon schools do not rest on their laurels. Each is committed to sharing best practices with other schools, and to helping to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Special congratulations are due to Cheltenham Elementary School for designing a curriculum that encourages students to research their community. Cheltenham students take field trips to historic homes, the police station, the township building, the library, and the local judge. Their learning also makes the students aware of needs of the less fortunate through activities such as providing food baskets and visits to nursing homes. As a result of these projects, Cheltenham students have gathered money to build a wall for a school in Ecuador and to purchase materials for a school devastated by a hurricane in Florida. They have also written letters to governments officials on behalf of a Native American group. Cheltenham students are learning civic responsibility at a young age.

McKinley Elementary School has demonstrated excellence in creating a safe school environment. The McKinley community understands that academic success can only grow in a violence-free classrooms, and has been a leader in these issues. They have taken a proactive approach to violence prevention by developing non-violent conflict resolution strategies, peer mediation program, parenting workshops, and school and police collaboration. The importance of McKinley's work in this area has been underscored by recent tragedies in schools across the nation.

Thomas Fitzwater Elementary School has taken special steps to meet the needs of all students. This commitment to have every child experience success is exemplified by the programs and accomplishments such as Thomas Fitzwater's Support One Student initiative, a child advocacy program to assist at-risk students. Each identified student is matched with a volunteer staff member. These members include professional, custodial, secretarial, and cafeteria staff. Regular personal contact by caring and supportive staff member promotes a positive environment and guides the student away from inappropriate and possibly destructive behavior. Another example of Thomas Fitzwater's inclusive policies is the collaboration between the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit special education classes and the regular education classes in our school. Throughout the county, the Intermediate Unit provides classes for children with low-incidence handicaps. Four of these classes are housed in Thomas Fitzwater's school building. Regular education children assist in these classes and are very sensitive to these excep-

tional children's needs. As a result of this collaboration, many special education students have been integrated into regular education classes. McKinley sets the bar high with its motto, "Success for All Students," and every school in the country should endeavor to meet this standard.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE COMMUNITY NURSING DEMONSTRATION EXTENSION ACT OF 1999

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 27, 1999

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, as a strong supporter of home- and community-based services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities, I rise to re-introduce legislation similar to that which I sponsored in the 104th and 105th Congresses to extend the demonstration authority under the Medicare program for Community Nursing Organization (CNO) projects.

CNO projects serve Medicare beneficiaries in home- and community-based settings under contracts that provide a fixed, monthly capitation payment for each beneficiary who elects to enroll. The benefits include not only Medicare-covered home care and medical equipment and supplies, but other services not presently covered by traditional Medicare, including patient education, case management and health assessments. CNOs are able to offer extra benefits without increasing Medicare costs because of their emphasis on primary and preventative care and their coordinated management of the patient's care.

The current CNO demonstration program, which was authorized by Congress in 1987 and extended for 2 years in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, involves more than 6,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Arizona, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York. It is designed to determine the practicality of prepaid community nursing as a means to improve home health care and reduce the need for costly institutional care for Medicare beneficiaries.

To date, the projects have been effective in collecting valuable data to determine whether the combination of capitated payments and nurse-case management will promote timely and appropriate use of community nursing and ambulatory care services and reduce the use of costly acute care services. Authority for these effective programs is now set to expire on December 31, 1999.

Mr. Speaker, while I am glad Congress extended the demonstration authority for the CNO projects last session, I am disappointed that the Health Care Financing Administration is so anxious to terminate this important and effective program. In 1996, HCFA extended the demonstration for one year to allow them to better evaluate the costs or savings of the services available under the program, learn more about the benefits or barriers of a partially capitated program for post-acute care, review Medicare payments for out-of-plan services covered in a capitation rate, and provide greater opportunity for beneficiaries to participate in these programs.

Frankly, in order to do all this analysis of the program, we need more time to evaluate the extensive data that has been collected. We should not let the program die as the data is reviewed. We need to act now to extend this demonstration authority for another three years.

This experiment provides an important example of how coordinated care can provide additional benefits without increasing Medicare costs. For Medicare enrollees, extra benefits include expanded coverage for physical and occupational therapy, health education, routine assessments and case management services—all for an average monthly capitation rate of about \$89. In my home State of Minnesota, the Health Seniors Project is a CNO serving over 1,600 enrollees in four sites, two of which are urban and two rural.

These demonstrations should also be extended in order to ensure a full and fair test of the CNO managed care concept. These demonstrations are consistent with our efforts to introduce a wider range of managed care options for Medicare beneficiaries. I believe we need more time to evaluate the impact of CNOs on patient outcomes and to assess their capacity for operating under fixed budgets.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize that the extension of this demonstration will not increase Medicare expenditures for care. CNOs actually save Medicare dollars by providing better and more accessible care in home and community settings, allowing beneficiaries to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and nursing home admissions. By demonstrating what a primary care oriented nursing practice can accomplish with enrollees who are elderly or disabled, CNOs are helping show us how to increase benefits, save scarce dollars and improve the quality of life for patients.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to consider this bill carefully and join me in seeking to extend these cost-savings and health care-enhancing CNO demonstrations for another three years.

DEDICATION OF THE NEW CITY HALL

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 27, 1999

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the volunteer efforts of so many people in Olfertman have been so extraordinary that one is tempted to suggest that the federal government consider this method of putting up new buildings in order to save ourselves from the cost overruns, delays, and problems that seem to plague this kind of enterprise all too often.

The efforts of people like the Edward Daniel family, Mrs. Lucille Chancey, Mrs. Ethel Roberson, the Sam Cason family, the Ray Cason family, the Harvey Dixon family, the Ellis Denison family, and so many, many others have been so inspiring that the entire community has created a feeling of togetherness that is similar to the feeling one experiences at a family reunion.

And speaking of families, the extended Cason family contributed to the enterprise in a way that brought generations together.